NCERT Solutions for Class 9 English Chapter 11 - My Childhood By NoteZilla

Question 1:

Where was Abdul Kalam's house ?

Answer:

On the Mosque Street in Rameshwaram.

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Question 2:

What do you think Dinamani is the name of ? Give a reason for your answer.

Answer:

'Dinamani' is the name of a newspaper. Kalam used to look at its headlines to know about the war.

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Question 3:

Who were Abdul Kalam's school friends ? What did they later become ?

Answer:

Abdul Kalam's school friends were Ramanadha Sastry, Aravindan and Sivaprakasan. Ramanadha took over the priesthood of the Rameswaram temple from his father. Aravindan went into the business of arranging transport for visiting pilgrims. Sivaprakasan became a catering contractor for the Southern Railways.

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Question 4:

How did Abdul Kalam earn his 'first wages' ?

Answer:

Kalam's cousin was a news-agent. Those were the days of war. The train halt at Rameswaram was suspended. Bundles of newspapers were thrown on the road from the running train. Kalam helped his cousin to collect these bundles. He was given some money for it. Thus Kalam earned his first wages.

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Question 5:

Had he earned any money before that ? In what way ?

Answer:

The second World War started in 1939. The demand for tamarind seeds increased suddenly. Abdul Kalam would collect the seeds and sell them to a provision shop. Thus he would earn one anna daily.

Hide Answer

Question 6:

How does Abdul Kalam describe (i) his father (ii) his mother and (iii) himself ?

Answer:

i. Kalam says his father didn't have much formal education. But he had natural wisdom. He didn't have much wealth. But he was very generous. He was an austere person. But he gave his children all they needed. He took all care of their food, medicine and clothes. But he was a man of discipline. He avoided inessential comforts and luxuries.
ii. Kalam says that his mother was an ideal wife. She was a kind and gentle lady. She used to feed at her house a number of outsiders daily. Kalam says that he learnt from his mother to be good and kind to others. His sister and his brother also learnt these qualities from their mother.
iii. Kalam tells us about his childhood days. He tells how he used to earn an anna a day by selling tamarind seeds. He tells us about his three friends at school. They were all Hindu Brahmins. Kalam had very good relations with them. He also tells about a Brahmin teacher who was very kind to him. He tells us of some unpleasant experiences also. But he never had any ill-feeling in his mind.

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Question 7:

What characteristics does Abdul Kalam say he inherited from his parents ?

Answer:

Kalam says that he inherited honesty and self-discipline from his father. From his mother, he inherited faith in goodness and deep kindness.

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Question 8:

"On the whole, the small society of Rameswaram was very rigid in terms of the segregation of different social groups," says the author.

What social groups does he mention ? Were these groups easily identifiable (for example, in the way they dressed) ?

Answer:

The author mentions the Hindus and Muslims living in Rameswaram. These groups could be identified easily. The Muslims could be identified by their cap; the Hindus by their sacred thread.

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Question 9:

"On the whole, the small society of Rameswaram was very rigid in terms of the segregation of different social groups," says the author.
Were they aware only of their differences or did they also naturally share friendships and experiences ? (Think of the bedtime stories in Kalam's house; of who his friends were; and of what used to take place in the pond near his house.)

Answer:

Hindus and Muslims knew their differences but lived peacefully. Kalam's close friends were Brahmins, his mother told him Ramayana stories, and his family helped during Rama–Sita's wedding festival. This shows their harmony and mutual respect.

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Question 10:

"On the whole, the small society of Rameswaram was very rigid in terms of the segregation of different social groups," says the author.
The author speaks both of people who were very aware of the differences among them and those who tried to bridge these differences. Can you identify such people in the text ?

Answer:

The author mentions two teachers with different attitudes. One new teacher discriminated against Kalam for being a Muslim and made him sit at the back. The other, a Brahmin science teacher, opposed such barriers. He invited Kalam home and served him himself. Later, his wife also welcomed Kalam in her kitchen. This shows that while some people created divisions, others worked to remove them.

Hide Answer

Question 11:

"On the whole, the small society of Rameswaram was very rigid in terms of the segregation of different social groups," says the author.
Narrate two incidents that show how differences can be created, and also how they can be resolved.
How can people change their attitudes ?

Answer:

The author recalls two school incidents. A new teacher, seeing Kalam's Muslim cap, made him sit at the back away from a Brahmin boy. In contrast, Kalam's science teacher opposed such discrimination. When his wife refused to serve Kalam food, the teacher served him himself. Later, his wife's attitude changed, and she served Kalam in her kitchen. These incidents show that while some create divisions, others can remove them through understanding and kindness.

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Question 12:

(i) Why did Abdul Kalam want to leave Rameswaram ?
(ii) What did his father say to this ?
(iii) What do you think his words mean ? Why do you think he spoke those words ?

Answer:

(i) After the second World War, it seemed certain that India would have her freedom. Gandhiji had said, "Indians will build their own India." Everybody was feeling inspired. Kalam decided to go to Ramanathapuram for further studies. That was why he wanted to leave Rameswaram. And he asked for his father's permission.
(ii) Kalam's father was very happy at this. He at once gave his consent. He knew that it would help Kalam to grow. Kalam's mother was a little hesitant. But the father said to her, "Your children are not your children. They come through you but not from you. You may give them your love but not your thoughts." The father believed that a child must have his own independent thoughts. They should not copy others blindly.
(iii) The father's words are full of deep wisdom. The young one of a bird can never learn to fly until and unless it leaves its nest. The father wanted his son not to be confined to his own home. He wanted him to belong to the entire humanity.

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Question 13:

What does Kalam say about the house where he lived ?

Answer:

Kalam's house was in the Mosque Street of Rameswaram. It was an ancestral house. It was quite a large one. It was built in the middle of the 19th century. It was a pucca house. It was made of limestone and brick.

Hide Answer

Question 14:

Kalam calls his father 'austere'. Do you think he is criticising his father ?

Answer:

Kalam is not criticising his father. He has great respect for his father. He calls him a man of discipline. Kalam's father was very generous. He gave his children all they needed. He took all care of their food, medicine and clothes. But he avoided inessential comforts and luxuries. He wanted his children also to live a life of discipline.

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Question 15:

What does Kalam say about his three childhood friends ?

Answer:

Kalam had three friends in his childhood. They were Ramanadha Sastry, Aravindan and Sivaprakasan. They were all from Brahmin families. But they felt themselves no different from Kalam. They treated Kalam as their equal. Ramanadha's father was the high priest of Rameswaram temple. Later, Ramanadha also became a priest of this temple. Aravindan started a business of his own. He arranged transport for visiting pilgrims. Sivaprakasan became a catering contractor for the Southern Railways.

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Question 16:

What role did Abdul Kalam's family play during the annual Shri Sita Rama Kalyanam ceremony ?

Answer:

They used to arrange boats for the ceremony. A special platform was built on these boats. Idols of the Lord were placed on the platform. They were carried from the temple to the marriage site. The place of the ceremony used to be in the middle of a pond. It was near Abdul Kalam's house. It was called Rama Tirtha.

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Question 17:

What did the new teacher say to Kalam and why ? What happened later ?

Answer:

Kalam was sitting on the same bench with Ramanadha Sastry. Ramanadha was the son of a Hindu priest. The new teacher didn't like a Muslim boy sitting with a Hindu boy in his class. He asked Kalam to go and sit on the last bench. Ramanadha felt very bad. He began to weep. His father was very angry when he came to know of it. He called the teacher. He asked the teacher to apologize or leave the school. The teacher felt sorry and reformed himself.

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Question 18:

What does Kalam say about his science teacher ?

Answer:

Kalam's science teacher was a Brahmin who did not believe in social barriers. He wanted everyone to live together in harmony. Once, he invited Kalam for a meal, but his wife refused to serve a Muslim. The teacher calmly served Kalam himself and ate beside him. This wise act changed his wife's attitude, and the next time, she welcomed and served Kalam in her kitchen.

Hide Answer